

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 14 are pending, of which claims 1, 7 and 13 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1 to 4, 7, 8, 13 and 14 were rejected over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,736 (Ogle); and claims 5, 6, 9 to 12, and 15 to 18 were rejected over Ogle in view of "The Routing Table" (Anderson). As shown above, Applicants have amended the claims to define the invention with greater clarity. In view of these clarifications, withdrawal of the art rejections is respectfully requested.

The independent claims have been amended to recite that an element of a data packet is altered if the data packet is received from an external network, and is not altered if the data packet is received from the private network. For example, in one embodiment, a time-to-live counter is decremented in the data packet if the data packet is received from an external network. However, the time-to-live counter is not decremented if the data packet is received from the private network. This feature is advantageous because it enables a distributed routing system, such as the example shown in application Fig. 1, to more closely simulate operation of a single integrated device.

The applied art is not understood to disclose or to suggest the foregoing features of the independent claims. More specifically, Ogle describes a system in which a data packet is routed to a first device, such as device 20, 24 or 26. If a routing table entry does not exist in the first device for the destination specified in the data packet, the data packet is routed to master device 22. Master device 22, which contains global routing tables, routes

the data packet accordingly, and updates a routing table on the first device to specify routes to the data packet's destination. Ogle thus describes updating routing tables. Ogle, however, is not understood to disclose or to suggest altering an element of the data packet if the data packet is received from one of the external networks, and not altering the element of the data packet if the data packet is received from the private network.

In this regard, it was said on page 2 of the Office Action, without any supporting argumentation whatsoever, that decrementing a TTL value by one is inherent in the disclosure Ogle. Applicants respectfully disagree. There is nothing in Ogle that would necessitate decrementing a TTL value by one. Should the Examiner persist in this contention, the Examiner is respectfully requested to provide an appropriate rationale.

Anderson, which was cited for its alleged disclosure of updating routing tables, is not understood to add anything that would remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Ogle vis-à-vis the independent claims. Accordingly, independent claims 1, 7 and 13, and the claims that depend therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

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Serial No. : 09/900,435
Filed : July 5, 2001
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Attorney's Docket No.: 10559-428001
Intel Ref.: P10442

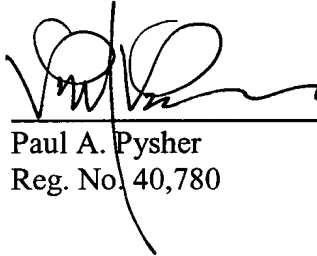
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney can be reached at the address shown below. All telephone calls should be directed to the undersigned at 617-521-7896.

Please apply any fees or credits due in this case to Deposit Account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 10559-428001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: May 9, 2005



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